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Introduction to the Study of Renaissance Architecture in Italy

Renaissance architecture in Italy began in the first decade of the fifteenth century, and it had since then such tremendous energy that from Italy it spread over France, Spain, England, Germany and all the countries in Western Europe, although it was somewhat modified according to the different characters of the people and the conditions of their countries. In France, we have French Renaissance, in England, English Renaissance, and so in other countries in Europe. It is perhaps our first desire to know why Italian Renaissance architecture had such a vital and expansive energy and such a tremendous influence upon Western architecture, making it appeared, the father of modern architecture. It seems to us that Renaissance architeture is not a mere creation like a fashion in dress, nor any sort of fancy and imagination that comes and goes like a flying moment. There is something permament in character behind the mere "cold walls and plasters", that is deeply rooted in our consciousness, that responds to our needs, and that once it is gained, can not be lost again, — it is 'the spirit of the ideal of Humanity'.

It is the purpose of this paper, not to treat the subject historically by tracing every important building in chronological ordor, but rather to interpret it as work of art, as have already suggested, and its relation to our modern architecture. In the following, we shall venture to make an investigation relating to the three main topies, which naturally come in our consideration: first, why Renaissance architecture began in Italy?, secondly, why Italy returned to the classical principles (classicalism), and lastly, characteristics of Renaissance architecture in Italy.

There is no doubt that in ordere to appreciate an art, it shall be perhaps our first task, to study the conditions of the peaple and their environment. It is generally accepted among by authors that art expresses character, feeling, and want. In other words, art is a faithful mirror of mankind; it responds to our needs, and it always reflects our culture, intellegence and activity. John Ruskin in his "Stones of Venice", states, that "art is valuable or otherwise, only as it expresses the personality, activity, and living perception of a good and great human soul." Art, however, not only expresses the character of the individual, but also that of corporation, which is nothing more than the aggrigate of individuals. In other words, a mental condition of the peaple determines the character of the art of those peaple. Taine says in his "philosphy of art in Italy", "a work of art is determined by aggrigate, which is the general state of the mind and of surrounding circumstances"

1. pp. 188; 2. pp. 87. "On the Production of the work of art."

Looking into the great period of the creation of art, for instance, the intellectural and highly cultivated peaple of ancient Greece[1], produced the art par excellence, and the ancient Romans[2], a peaple with a more practical mind, created essentially art of utility, while the peaple of the christian middle ages created the art of spiritural significance. Italians[3] according to the authorities, were peaple, more or less analagous the ancient Greeks and Romans, they were quick and intellegent, capable of being highly cultivated under favorable condilions. We shall next see how Italians were brought up in the beginning of the fifteenth century, when the Renaissance Architecture sprang up in the Italian Soil.

1. Viollet-Le-Duc; "Lecture on architecture," vol I. pp. 76, "The Greek architecture attained proportions that satisfies both his reason and his senses, which are of exquisite delicacy."

2. By the same anther, pp. 76. "Romans, art is made subservient to the interests of the state, conforms to its requirements, and becomes simply an instrument, a means to an end."

3. Freeman; "History of architecture", pp. 125., "Gothic (architecture) glories in being infinite, unfettered, spiritual, majestic; it is the expression of something not to be comprehended in the original limits of humanity, or indeed by aught of the material world."

It is agree in asserting among authorities that the Teutonic invasion in Italy in the end of the fifth century marked the decay of the Roman Empire. The ancient Roman civilization

was gone. The barbarians overran Italy. The country was ruled by the Goths, the Byzantines, and the Lombards. The Teutons doubtless absorbed much of Roman cultures and civilization; and in return, they infused a certain amount of Teutonic vigor into their neighbours. During the middle ages, however, Roman civilization, institutions and arts, while yielding to German influences, never disappeared beneath them.

1a, H.F. Pelham, "outline of Roman History," pp. 598. "the emancipation of Italy and the Western Provinces from direct imperial control, which is signalized by Odoacer's accession, has rightly been regarded as marking the opening of a new epoch."

b. Edward Gibbon, "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," vol. IV; pp. 55. "Extinction of the Western Empire, A.D. 476, or A.D. 479. pp. 49, Odoacer King of Italy A.D. 476–490."

2. J. C. L. Sismondi, "History of the Italian Republics in the Middle ages." pp. 58. "the spirit of municipal life," he says, "at least remained in the form of tradition; nay, that this spirit was always active; and that it gave the breadth of life to the new institutions, that came into being with the new world, that unfolded itself when fresh and vigorous growth arose, intermingling their leafage with the old, pollarded, almost up-rooted, but still vital relics of the ancient world," he continues, "the organization of the Roman church, moreover, corresponded with the ancient Imperial organization, and it continued to represent, feebly indeed, the ancient culture. The pope was elected by the Senate, the people, and the clergy of Rome. ..... the Roman law remained in use among the Latin population of Italy throughout the centuries of barbarian rule."

After the barbarian invasion peaple were gradually gather-ed around the walls of ancient municipality. Each commune was more or less free and independent, and enjoyed its self-govern-ment. Italian communes grew strong rapidly partly because Italy had no centralized government. The existence of the Holy Roman Empire under the elective Emperor, who was also a King of Germany; and the Papacy as the spiritual lord-ship of Latin christiandom prevented the formation of a national consolidation. Thus the cities were left to adapt free and vigorus policy of industry, commerce and trade. Each city adapted its policy solely with reference to its own interest, and freed itself from the laws and customs, which lay like fetters upon developing trade and industry. "The city of Florence, for instance," Clay Day says, "showed a liberality in policy regarding land tenure, indnstry, domestic and forign commerce, which was strickly modern."[2]

1. Siemondi pp. 203. "although we speak of the Italian self-government communes, we must not forget that was only the highest stratum of society, that was represented in the government."

2. Clay Day. "History of Commerce," pp. 98.

The monarchy, moreover, aided these free communes where there was no strongly-established feudal power. Sismondi says that "in Northern and Central Italy, there was no established feudal power. The barons had added the spirit of their native insubordination to the spirit of independence that characterlized the towns of which they become citizens; and these towns," he continues, "become powerful, not by charter, but through the benovelent neutrality

or the importence of previous monarchs;"--and lastly he emphasizes the fact that, "there lay the germinal principle of free development and even of the national sentiment of civilization, and an emancipation of thought and life, which the rigid and austere conception of universal monarchy could never foster." 1. Sismondi, pp. 107, "the age of the communes," 1154-1250

As the result, when the cities became strong, they found it easy to become little independent city states as in Greece, after the manner of the feudal principalities in Germany. Many powerful states were able to extend smaller towns and added a considerable state like that of Milan. These republics pursued their own interests without regard to others. They were seldom united, except by some common danger. The leagues occasionally formed for common interests such as the Lombard League against Frederic Barbarosa.

It often happened that conflicting interests led to the fiercest struggles between the neighbouring republics ending only with the ruin of one of the revival, such as the contest between Pisa and Genoa, Venice and Genoa, or Florence and Pisa. Within the city walls civil war[2] prevailed, and whenever a dispute arose,

1. Sismondi, pp. 267, "In 1284, war between Pisa and Genoa, twenty eight men-of-war was the prizes of the Genoese, with 11,00 Prisoners, and it was estimated that no less than 5,000 Pisans had fallen in the fight. There was not a single family in Pisa, that has not suffered the loss of father, brother, son. We were told for six month nought was to be heard there but the sounds of weeping and lamentation"

2. Lodges "the close of the middle age", pp. 27. "the long quarrel between the popes and the Hohenstaufen Emperors bequeathed a fatal heritage to Italy in the party feuds

of Guelfs and Ghibellines."
the disputing parties tried to be expatriated, or often to destroy each other. The struggle between the classes, privileged and unprivileged, was then another common feature of those day. In the Italian Republic, as we have already noticed in Italian communes, practically speaking, in the thirteenth century, and even in still latter times, no Italian had any notion of any representive form of government in our meaning of the term. Common citizens had no voice in city administration. Their municipality consisted of a small body of burghers, who alone had the privalege of government. Symonds says; "citizenship was hereditary in their families by whom it had been once aquired. Each republic having its own criterion of its rights, and guarding it jealously against the encroachments of non-qualification. In Florence, the burgher must belong to one of the arts, In Venice his name must be inscribed upon the 'Golden Book'."

Such was the unstable state of the country that was most likely to attract a man of ablity and ambition; and the possibility of success depended on the personal merits only,— individual temper, character, and intellect. Sismondi strongly maintains that tyrant was essentially the outcome of the time. He says; "it seemed a less evil to the towns north of the apennincs to surrender their liberties to a single strong ruler, than to remain in a condition of anarchy at home, and insecurity from external foes," he continunes, "it was some satisfaction to have order preserved and justice speedly excuted within the city walls, however

arbitrary or illegal the power that put an end to the anarchy." Further he emphasizes the fact, that the stronger leader is absolutely necessary to maintaine peace in the country. He says, "quarrels between nobles and burgers within the city ceased when a stronger ruler arose, might brought to secure his position by exiling his foes, ... nobles unable to preserve their order, save by submissive to a chief, because gradually converted into court dependents, the burgers were enable to combine, and had neither the solderly qualities nor the habits of command needful to secure the respect and obedience of mercenary troops, the common peaple were content to be ruled by a master so elected in station, that he was in a measure above prejudices of rank, and who democratzed society by the very fact of the despotism .... These incessant wars of themseves necessiated a centralized government, and despotic ruler was inevitable."

It might be interesting to notice what a diversity of character these tyrants presented in themselves at this epoch. Despotism recruited its ranks from all classes, and elected themselves in its thrones. "Capacity," symonds says, "might raise the meanest monk to the chair of St. Peters, the meanest soldier to the duchy of Milan, — audacity, vigour, unscrupulousness, crime, were the chief requsites for success.[3,4]

1. Symonds, "The age of Despots", pp. 195
2. Sismondi, pp. 343. 3. Symonds, pp. 91. "The age of Despots."

So far we have been tracing the political back ground, which may cast a shadow upon the Italian municipal life during the middle ages. We may now investigate the growth of the individul, which was essentially the outcome of the political mutation, which we have already suggested in the preceeding paragraphs. We shall particularly lay stress on the phase of the growth of the individual in which began the real starting point of the perfection of Italian genius, which produced such high art in the Italian Renaissance.

During the greater part of the middle ages, as we have noticed, it had been characterliged by social unceasiness, a struggle between nobles and burghers, previlaged and unprevilaged classes, which was intensified by civil wars and commercial struggles. Although we have not seen feudalism ever have a strong hold in Italy, such as in Germany. We must not forget that the Principle of feudalism Prevailed

4. Symonds. "The age of the Despots"., "Six sorts of despots in Italian cities" (14th + 15th. centuries) pp. 110-115. "The first class consisted of a very small one, had a hereditary right accruing from long seignorial possession of their several districts; the houses of Montferrat, Savoy, the Marquises of Ferrara, and the Princes of Urbino. The 2nd class, nobles who obtained the title of Vicars of the Empire, and built an illegal power upon the basis of imperial right on Lombardy, Della Cala and Visconti families. The 3rd, nobles charged with military or judicial power, as Capitanis or podestae, by the free burghs, used their authority to enslave the cities they were chosen to administer. It was thus that almost all the numerous tyrants of Lombardy, Carraresi at Parma, Tarresei and Visconti at Milan, and so forth in first created their despotic dynasties. This fact in the history of Italian tyranny is noticeable; 4th, the principle of force was still more openly at work. To it may be assigned three condottieri made a prey of cities at their pleasure. 5th, includes the nephews or sons of Popes. The Riario Principality of Forli, the Farnese of

throughout the peninsula except perhaps in the few growing independent cities, as have been noticed. The majority of the population, however, were agricultists, and they were more or less attached to the land, they had little freedom and opportunity, and if not in the worst were miserable condition. Individual merit had been scracely reconqnized, and that he was only considered as a part of corporation, of which the greatest one,— the Church. Perhaps the typical illustrations of the mediaeval activity were the Crusades and chivalry in the height of mediaeval civilization. "During the mediaeval ages," symonds Says, "the reason was not awake; the mind of man was ignorant of its own treasures and its own capacities. The mental condition of the middle ages was one of ignorant prostration before the idols of the church — dogma, authority and scholasticism."[1] Hegel in his aethetics suggests the mental attitude of mediaeval peaple toward Greek deities perhaps worth while mentioning here. "Greek deities," he says, "never appeal to the profoundest human sympathies. They never suffer, they never die. Hence they are never loved, but

Parma, 6th, and lastly, this again in large and of the first importance, citizens of eminence, like the Medici at Florence, the Blenti Vogli at Bologna, the Baghini of Perugia, the Vitelli of Cilla di Castello, the cambacorti of Pisa, Pandolf Petrucci in Sienna, aquired more than their due influence in the conduct of affairs. In most of these cases great wealth was the original source of despotic ascendency."

1. Symonds. "The age of Despots," pp. 5.

2. Hegel's aethetics, translated by Kedney, pp. 136.

only admired, envied and feared, only a selected mortal now and then is lifted up to them. Their immortal serenity in the midest of human agonies, and the unrest of this everlasting struggle of man and nature, too, is itself the intensest contradictions; what Gods are these that have no pity?" Hegel's view of the mediaeval attitude toward life is perhaps sentimental and greatly exaggerated, yet we may admit there are some positive facts which we can easily find in mediaeval arts. Every body knows in a mediaeval sculpture that there is great deal of stiffness in the human pose, especially in the earlier period, that, as in painting and sculpture, subordinates the physical beauty of the body to the facial espression of character, and that the grotesque carvings were their favorite.

It will be naturally our next inquiry, how the individuals relieved themselves from mediaeval institutions, and that changed attitude toward life and the external world. We have here been noticed that Italian communes gave the favorable conditions for the growth of Italian individualityes. It will be further noticed that the growth of Italian individualism was felt as the same time as the growth of Italian communes. As early as the twelve century, we are told that in Italian communes occurred a rapid extension of domestic industry and foreign commerce, and the taller was further promoted by commercial treaties.

1. Arthur Kingsley Portery, "Mediaeval architecture", vol. II. pp. 293. "queer beings, half men, half monster, - - - - learned devil and griffin, Relican, and elephant, looking out over the city now with a look of malignant hatred, now with an espression of infinite sadness and longing."

For instance, according to Napier, "In 1171 Florence signed a commercial treaty with the city of Pisa, in 1191 she became a powerful member of the Tuscan League, in 1201 concluded a treaty with the Ubaldini, loads of the Mugello, for the safe-conduct of merchandise into Lombardy, and in 1287 a similar convention with Genva. In the following year treaties with Scena, Lucca, Prato, and Pistoia succeeded, by which all tolls, and duties on goods and persons were reciprocally renounced." he futher continues. "This indicates a considerable expansion of mind and domestic industry," and he particularly emphasizes, "industry not spring up from the land, which was neither rich in quality nor great in surface, but because the natural faculties and activity of the people had been left unfetted by the establishment of FREE INSTITUTIONS." It is not too much to say that the growth of Italian individuality was essentially the outcome of the "free institutions, which lets men's faculties unfettered, and awaked them to store up the potential energy, which gave the fatal stroke to the mediaeval institutions. When the communes became strong, and men gradually realized power and energy within themselves, through the activity in commerce and industry, we have seen the feudal system was rapidly de-cling at the end of thirteenth century. As we have already noticed under the regime of the Italian Republics and of despotism, the transformation of the individual being carried still farther. The mediaeval restrictions upon man's consciousness, and social distinction between the classes was rapidly

displaced by the growing influence of individuality. Burckhardt states, "Despotism fostered in the highest degree the individuality not only of the tyrant, but also of the men whom he protected or used as his tools, — the secretary, minister poet, and companion. These people were forced to know all the inward resources of their own nature, passing or permament, and their enjoyment of life was enhanced and concentrated by the desire to obtain the greatest satisfaction during a possibly very brief period of power and influence."[1]

The diversity of life noticed in these Italian communes doubtless stimulated a general mental activity among the citizens. Men began to think as well as to act for themselves, and there only opened the career for their life. This is the spirit of the new age, what Michelet says it characterized by the "discoverys of man and of the world." It should notice the fact that the discovery of man naturally was followed by the discovery of the world. As potential energy is required to do a work, it was the men needed first the energy within themselves in order to investigate and to discover the external world. It was hardly the case that the new age produced the awakened men (modern man), although it will be admitted that further development of the individual depended largely upon the results of inventions, and the recovery of ancient literature and knowlege. It is sufficient to

1. Renaissance in Italy, pp. 130.

notice here that such was the vast transformation of individual within herself, which took place in Italy as the end of the thirteenth century, and also according to some in the begining of the fourteenth century. Man at this epoch already passes from the mediaeval manner to the spirit of the modern world.

However, we cannot omit giving some consideration to Italian geniusthemselves. We have already discussed in the preceding paragraphs the favorable conditions of the country and the mental activity of individuals who were unable themselves to throw off the mediaeval yoke and emerge the light of the new age. In this sense, the new movment is a gradual awakening of intellegence, rather than that what Symonds says in his work, "the Spirit of Renaissance," — "spontenous outbust of intellegence at this period." However, if we consider the Italian race itself, that it gives some reason in favor of Symonds' idea, and that it counts for the movment.

all agree in asserting that the imagination of the Italian, that is to say, is Latin, analogious to that of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Evidence of this is found not alone in its Renaissance work, its sculpture, edifices and paintings, but also in its mediaeval architecture.

1. Simpson, History of architecture, vol. II. pp. 168. "S. ambrigio, Milan, S. Michele, and S. Pietro in Ciello d'oro, Pavia and Novara Cathedral. all are vaulted throughout, ... Proportions, in fact are those of the old Roman vaulted buildings ---- and it is doubtful if the mediaeval men ever improved upon them."

2. Fergusson, Handbook of architecture vol. II Pp. 500, "Latter Romanesque at this period of returning prosperity (11th century), we find several churches of great beauty and importance retaining all the peculiarities of the true Romanesque Style, with only so slight a trace of Gothic feeling as merely to show that in the interval the Lombards had penetrated to these shores, and left an impress of their existence there, but so slight as even to be obliterated by the older civilization, which the new were then incapable of superseding."

3. Sturgis and Frothingham, a History of architecture Vol. III pp. 249, "Of all European countries, Italy showed herself least susceptible to Gothic art, and never thoroughly understood or like it. The round arch was never entirely eliminated; the ribbed-vault never wholly superseded the wooden roof; the principle of a balanced thrust was not properly applied; the architectural forms, such as the flying buttress and immense windows, which are the logical result of these principles, were almost never used. The extensive choir, with its crown of radiating chapels and its ambulatory, so characteristic of a French interior, was never adapted. Of course a few transitional and Gothic buildings built by Cistercian architects, which are relatively pure, but hardly a single structure due to Italian hands can be judged by northern standards. They are works sui Generis. Italy rejected science in architecture. ..... The buildings at Fossa Nuova by the hands of French monks, and the church is similar to that of the order at Pontigny in Burgundy — the most interesting and well-preserved monastic building in Italy."

We are told further that Italians were not being Teutonnaged at least in great extent, and that they retained the characteristics, —— so intellegence, the extreme acutness and readiness of mind which were peculiar to them. Charles A. Moore, 'Character of Renaissance architecture states "The native traditions and innate tendencies of the Italians people were enough of themselves to give a strong classic quality to their art." Taine in his philosphy of art in Italy analized Italian merit and became to the conclusion, which is worth mentionning here, as he says; "Civilization seems to the innate, they at least, obtain to it almost without effort and almost without assistence, even among peasants and the uncultivated, the intellegence is quick and free," he continues, "Compare them with People of the same condition in the north of France, in Germany, and in England; the difference will become a contrast. In Italy a hotel boy, a peasant, a porter, whom you meet in the street, know how to talk, comprehend and reason; they advance opinions, they know mankind, they discuss politics, they manipulate ideas as they do language, by instincts, sometimes brillantly, always with facility and almost always correctly; and above all they posses the natural and impassioned sentiment for the beautiful. Only in this country do we hear the populace exclamation before a picture or church, "oh God, how beautiful its! (oDio com'è bello)."

Henry Edward Napier[3] in his history of Florence gives us a similarly vivid picture of Florence genius, "The Florentines were certainly endowed with a most acute intellect and wonderful taste and genius." he emphasizes, "nothing came amiss to them, war, commerce, arts, Science, literature and politics, whenever they set their mind to they mastered and they produced men who made themselves famous in all, and it seems more extraordinary if their habits and education are considered; accustomed from earliest infancy and for the most trifling wages to carry bundles of wool and baskets of silk like common porters; all day and a great portion of the night fixed at the loom and other machinery; to be employed in shops and warehouses at the desk and scales, and then to come forth as statemen, leaders of armies, ambassadors, masters of all the higher branches of civilization and to shine every where, shows a power and pliancy of intellect and a natural fineness of character."

It is only necessary to add here a word that Italian genius acting on the awakened man is considered one of the

1. pp. 8.

2. pp. 26,

3. pp. 23. vol. IV. History of Florence.

chief factors of the intellectual movment. Yet we agree in asserting that, in order to enable man to appreciate and produce high art. he must, in the first place, be cultivated. During the fourteenth century, we have notice that the general conditions in the country were favorable for peaceful pursuits under the benebolent despots. Each city laid down arms and engaged industry, domestic and foreign commerce; and turned in attention to securing comforts, arts, and literature. The age was essentially characterized by the development of cutture and civil life. Florence for instance, in the begining the fowrteenth century, was in one of the glorious period in Florentine Hestory, and the mind is immened by wonder to behold from one small city in a single century shine out so brightly an assemblage of fresh and lofty intellects. In Law, in physics, in theology, philosphy and literature, painting, sculpture and architecture, is produced, not one, but several of the highest order of genius. Napier states, that, "there were from eight to ten thousand children of both sexes learning to read; from a thousand to twelve hundreds studing aristhmetic in six school and between five and six hundred at grammer and logic in four great Seminaries. There were a hundred and ten churches in the town and suburbs, ---- 30 haspitals with a thousand beds for the poor and infirm ---the work shop of the wool-trade amounted to more than two hundred and from seventy to eighty thousands pieces

1. napier, vol. II. pp. 579

of cloth were annually manifactured, with the value of 1,200,000 florins. There were eight banks and from 350,000 to 400,000 golden florins of seventy two grains weight and finners of twenty four corats annually issued from the mint, and about twenty thousand pounds weight of smaller coins ---- the College of Judges was composed of eighty members; notaries of six hundred, physians and surgans of Sixty, merchant and marcers abound, the number of Masons, carpenters and varies other trades and artisians was very large, and about three hundred citizens were employed out of Florence in foriqn negociations."[1]

Many agree in the fact that luxary and refinement increased rapidly after the commencement of the fourteenth century, when the extension of commerce and foriqn travel brought with them increased riches, new wants, and deeper sensuality. Luxary seems to have been a prevailing caprice throughout Italy. Fashion became more changeable and whimsical, a probable effect of the Strigent sumptuary laws. In 1330 a law Provided in Florence that no woman shall thence forth indulge in its extravegence or use of any intention of such costly ornaments unless executed in paper, nor wear any other than very simple clothing nor flounces of Gold, Silver, jewles, enamels or glass allowed, nor more than two rings in fingures

1. Napier, vol. II. pp. 535

Florence was in this period, well studded with handsome dwelling; the citizens were continuously building, repairing, altering, and embellishing the houses. adding every day to the ease and comfort and introducing improvements from foreign nations. Napier states, "there was no popular citizens, or noble man but either had built or was building the country palace and villas, for exceeding their city residence in size and magnificance, so that many were accountable the crazy for their extravagence." The growing taste for building was due to partly a national consegence and commercial prosperity and partly repeated action of sumptuary Law, which in restricting personal expense and sensual gratification gave a new direction and intellectual character to taste. Encouragement given to private architecture came also from other source, provided in a law, intended primarily for population than art.

1. Napier, vol. II. pp. 581.

2. Napier, vol. II. pp 584. "a law of 1392, enforced with penalties, which obliged every new made citizen to build dwelling in Florence at least 100 florins value era he could exercise his civil rights, and ample space of an encumbered ground within the walls afforded plenty of room, so that, according to Migliore, there were more palaces than houses."

We must, however, keep in mind, although domestic

life in Florence were gradually corroded by increasing opulence, long regulated the Tuscan simplicity was not totally up-rooted, especially among the best classes. Napier states "among whom the most wealthy men at the end of the century never overstepped the modesty of civil life." Nothing more interesting is to notice that the peculiar condition of Italian culture at this time which is highly capable for the higher civilization. Taine in philosphy of art in Italy suggests that the balance in the human intellect is the key note for producing high art. He says, "to make the arts of design flourish demands a soil which is not uncultivated, but at the same time, which is not over-cultivated." In another place, he emphasizes the fact that "the Renaissance is a unique movment, intermediate between the middleages and modern times, between a lack of culture and over-culture, between the reign of crude instincts and the reign of ripe ideas," he continues, "man ceases then to be a gross, warlike, carnivorous animals, only capable of exercising his limbs; he has not yet become a devotee of the mid-lamp or of the drawing-room, only capable of exercising his tongue and his understanding. He has long profound reveries like the savage he is moved by keen, delicate curiosity like the civilized man. Like the former he thinks through images; like the latter he discovers laws. Like the former he

he seeke sensuous pleasures, like latter he steps beyond vulgar pleasure. His appetities have become refined. He is interested in external things, but he requires to have them perfect."

1. Napier, vol. IV. pp. 16
2. pp. 60; 3. op. 79.

Our next consideration is to show Italian cutture at this time was retated to that of the ancients. It is agree among authority that culture needs a guide. Civilization could not at once without help find the way to the understanding of the material and intellectual world. We have told that Greeks had owed much of his civilizatim to Egypt; Roman to Greeks in her aethetic appreciation in arts, and the Early christian architecture to Roman. The christian basilica was ordinary a reclangular building with the sanctuary at oneend and was extremely simple in design and showing only slight changes from Roman method of construction. Byzantine architecture retained Roman method of construction and added to them their own love of ornament, color, a consious or unconscious imitation of oriental textile patterns. Anderson, justifying the classical Principles in Italy, states, "all ages of healthy human prosperity are more or less revival and have been marked by a retrospective tendency," he emphasizes, "Such periods in history appear, by a natural law, to derive the best in every department which tradition has achived and

1. A History of architecture of Renaissance, pp. 4.

failing to find satisfaction in the present, will take a delight in what in past, to extent of reviving it. This has characterized all blooming epochs."

It is, however, much more difficult in asserting that whether Italy found a guide in Roman or Greek classic, or in both, which are, especially in architecture, opposed directly in their character. It is expedient to mention here the nature of Greek and Roman arts, as well as their relation to the peoples and states. For the Renaissance architecture had primarily drew its inspiration from the classics, as well as from material contribution. It is not too much to say that the more we study the classics the more we can appreciate Renaissance architecture. Many authorities agree in asserting even rather that Renaissance is not mere reaction against mediaeval architecture, nor mere revival of classical architecture, but it is the continuence of the Principles and Practice of classical architecture, which was temporarily interrupted, though not entirely, during the middle ages.

The essential quality of the Greeks is intellectural and of Romans the practical. The genius of the Roman people naturally differs from that of the Greeks. The Roman being essentially an administrator and a politician. If we analize the buildings of Romans generally we shall

invariously discern the political and administrative ideas of the Romans, and that practical spirit of the Romans, which makes the arts subordinate to the interests of the state, conforms to its requirements and simply an instrument a means to an end. The State was hence more to them than the arts. Conquest, Wealth, and consequent power were the objects of their ambitions, for these they sacrificed every thing, and by these means they attained a height of greater than nation had reached before since; Their arts therefore all the impress of the greatness, as intentionally displayed Imperial power.

The Analysis of a Greek building reveals to us instincts and objects of a different nature. Grecian is the most liberal and refined interpretation of noble human intellects. Endowed with taste, and above all lover of form, they rejected whatever tended in any degree to impair harmony and unity. They were characterized by acute intellegence, that delicate Perception which knows how to conquer every difficulty and obstacle to the ultimate advantage of art, even in most minute details. With the Greeks art is Sovereign, the rule is undisputed; to them arts are not means, but the aim.

The Romans contended in actuality, the Grecian ideal. The imaginative power of the Greek mind was

great enough to realize the idea of abstract perception in shape, and to employ it in representations of the human figure. Hegel states "the Greek received their divinities by tradition from the orient, but what was these vague and obscurely symbolic, becomes in their minds clear and fixed, crystalized into perfect shape as an ideal, so that you can see the distinct thought, the symmetrical and well-rounded conception in the Greek statures, while in the Egyptian it is imperfect, suggestive, mystic, bewildering. Thus illumination of the ideal in the Greek mind was owning the precise comprehension of itself as spirit, now lifted up for its own admiration as a seemingly perfect thing. The Muses which have beclouded the human self-consciousness have subduced and it in the sunshine." But the realistic turn of the Roman mind could not appreciate abstract or imaginary beauty. Therefore they contended themselves with exact representative of the actual facts and figures of human life. Thus in their attempts to imitate form, as in the cases of the busts or statures of Pompey, or Claudius, the Roman realism spoils the ideal effect. The Roman realism tends to express the character of the person represented, while the Greeks wished to impress the mind of the spectator.

1. pp. 136. Hegel's aesthetics.

The Roman is not an artist, like the Greek, but a great builder. He is contended to adapt to the purpose the beautiful details of grecian ornaments and to emulate so far as he could that grandeur and breadth of design which characterized the works of the Romans. They did not possess an eye for fine proportion of outline, or symetrical and harmonius combination of details. A certain valgar love of gorgeous and costly ornaments and an incapacity for appreciating the beauty of symetry and purity, pervade all their most elaborate buildings. The Romans, on the other hand, were first to develope the science of planning. Greek buildings had often been symetrical, but had never been complex. They were regularly in form a plain rectangular with various simple divisions. It was left to the Romans to discover how to plan a complecated structure. These buildings present an aggregation of chambers which have each their due dimensions, their points of support have an importante merely relative to these dimensions. It is desiable to notice how in these vast establishment space is economised, how the constructive masses are hollowed when this can be done without sacrifice of solidity. If from the plan we proceed to examine the sections and elevations we see that the hights of the chambers are in due relation to their perimeter, and yet the whole together forms but one building like a hive composed of cells of various sizes. Their baths, for instance, formed blocks sometimes five hundred feet square, divided into many rooms of various sizes, to meet

the practical conditions of the problem, to give the various rooms in relative amount of space their importance required, to arrange them convenently, to plan the circular communication between them, and to light sufficently the internal rooms, and in short to fullfil all the demands of practical use and convinence this was a task of colossal difficulty and one in which a Roman architect excelled.

1. Fergussion's 'History of architecture', vol I, pp. 309. "The paths of Caracalla, — the general plan of the whole enclosure of the baths Caracalla, was a square of about 1150 ft, each way with a bold but graceful curvilinear projection on two sides, containing porticoes, gymnasia, lecture rooms, and other halls for exercise of mind or body. In the rear were the reservoirs to contain the requisite water, and below them the hypocaust or furnace, by which it was warmed with a degree of scientific skill we hardly give the Romans of that age credit for. Opposite to this and facing street was one great portico extending the whole length of the building, into which opened a range of apartments meant apparently to be used as private baths, which extend also some-way up each side. In front of the hypocaust, was a semicircle or theatridium, 530 ft. long, where youths performed their exercises or contended for prizes. These parts were, however, merely the accessories of the establishment surrounding the garden, in which the principal building was placed. This was a rectangular 730 ft by 380, with a projection covered by a dome on the south Western side, which was 167 ft. in diameter extending and 115 ft. internally. — — — The modern building which approaches nearest in extend to this is probably our Parliament Houses, 890 ft in length, with an average breadth of about 300; and Westminster Hall, covers as nearly as may be the same area in the central block

With Romans we have the structure and details and ornaments the later entirely subordinated to the former. With Greeks we have the architecture having distinctly organic form, — each member, no matter how it is a minate detail, constitutes part of the whole, can not be rejected without destroying the unity and harmony as a whole. With Greeks the arts are an end, not the mean, we can understand the distinct expression of the purpose, the requirement, and the means of execution. There are nothing vague, nor valgar grandeur, which are qualities more or less far from to respond our inward life; but always they are clear and distinct, to be understood. Hence their object above all is to be human. The Greek arts are separated from the state and institutions, but united with man and ever dear to man. Violet-le-Duc gives us a vivid comparative conception of Greek and Roman arts, which is worth mention. He states that, "Greek architecture may be best compared to man stript of his clothes, the external parts of whose body are but the consequence of his organic structure, of his wants, of the frame work of his bones, and the functions of his muscles, and Roman architecture, on the other hands, may be compared a man clothed: there is the man, and there is the dress, the dress may be good or bad, rich or poor in material, well or ill cut, but it forms no part of the body; if well made and handsome, it merits examination; if it restraines the man's movements, and its shape has neither reason nor grace, it is unworthy of notice. In Roman

architecture we have the structure, — the veritable, substantial, and useful construction devised to meet the requirements of a plan laid down by a master hand; and we have also the covering, — the adornment, — which is independent of the structure, as the dress is independent of the man's body. To Roman, whose tendencies are merely political, its form is a question of secondary importance. He demands but one thing from the apparellers of his buildings, which is, that the dress shall do his honor," He continues, "otherwise, it is a matter of independence to him whether it is structually logical, whether it exactly interprets the essential constructive forms of the edifice, — whether it is the fit, and true clothing of those forms, and whether it explains their purposes. The Roman occupies a position above, or if we will, beside the Greek reasoner, he does not understand him."

We have from Romans the practical conception of life and from Greeks the intellectual; and both found a humanism, on which rests modern civilization. We have noticed also, in the preceding paragraphs, that, in the begining of the fifteenth century, had been reached a certain point in culture, which mediaeval men never had attained. Italians at that time were consciously or unconsciously self-educated and, at the same time, educated by the time and the circumstances in which they were forced to expose themselves. They were now brought up to face new problem, and new wants to crave, which were

1. Pp. 81. Violet-le-Duc, Lectures on architecture, Vol. I.

much those the ancients sought and achived. We have noticed again that Italians were a people at that time, so keenly intelligent to comprehend in the master productions of the past the highest ancient civilization, and that they found them there what was the vital need of the present, that again found them needing a guide from the ancients. The new movement, however, was not only a mere revival of the ancient culture, but also essentially a new creation in enlarged plateform. Renaissance arts were, on other words, essentially the creation of the spirit of the modern, based on humanism founded by the ancients, and, if you will, the added spirit of christianity which once hold the mind of the Western people that cannot entirely be lost since then in our time.

1. charles. H. Moore, 'character of Renaissance architecture', pp. 4.

"To the ancient Greek and Roman the pagan ideals had been real, and their inspiration was genuine; but to the Italian of the fifteenth century these ideas could not have the same meaning, or supply a true incentive. After the intervening centuries of christian thought and experience it was impossible for men to approach the ancient themes in the spirit of the ancients. Thus the Neo-pagan art of the Renaissance is not wholly spontaneous and sincere. It contains elements that are foreign to the pagan spirit, and not compatible with it. The art of the Renaissance is in fact an embodiment of heterogenous ideas and conflicting aims."

We shall be content, in our remaining paragraphs, to include some of the most characteristic phases of Renaissance architecture, roughly covering two centuries, the beginning of the fifteenth century to the end of the Sixteenth century. Authorities agree in asserting that the Renaissance in Italy began in Florence in the first decade of the fifteenth century among the masters of genius, such as Brunelleschi, Ghiberty, Donatello, and almost contemporously, Michelozzo, alberti, Cronaca, and others developed an extremely fruitful activity. Vasari who was contemporly with Michelangelo states this, "the revival of antiquity in art may be dated from a visit of Brunelleschi and Donatello to Rome, for it was the most important of the immediate steps in the long march of discovery." He gives us also a vivid picture of Brunelleschi at Rome. He says; "..... but he never rested while in Rome until he had well pondered on all the difficulties involved in the vaulting of the Ritonda, the Pantheon, in that city, and had naturally considered the means by which it might be effected," he continued, "he also well examined and made careful drawings of all the vaults and arches of antiquity; to these he devoted perpetual study, and if by chance the artist found fragments of capitals, columns, or basements of buildings burried in the earth, to set laborers to work and caused them to be dig out, until, the foundation was laid open to the view. Reports of the being spread about Rome, the artists

1. vasari, vol.I. pp. 254, note. 2. vasari, vol.I. pp. 255

were called "treasure Seekers", and this name they frequently heared as they passed, negligently clothed, along the street, the people believing them to be men who studies geomancy for the discovery of treasures; the cause of which was that they had one day found an ancient vase of earth, full of coins. The money of Fillipp (Brunelleschi) failing short, he supplied the lack by selling precious stones for the gold smiths who were his friends; which served him for a resources ...."

His not too much to say that these "treasure seekers" at any rate were the first runner of the newage. They were fully animated by the spirit of the ancients., and endevoured to search every possible Source of information. It was Brunelleschi who first revived the use of the ancient cornice and who restored the Tuscan, corinthian, Doric, and Ionic orders to their primative forms. Vasari again states that, "he (Brunelleschi) had drawn every description of fabric (translated construction), - temple, round, square, or octagonal, basilicas, aqueducts, baths, and all the modes of building and ----- the different orders were divided by his care, each order, Doric, Ionic, or corinthean, being placed aparts, and such was the effect of his zeal in that study, that he came capable of entirely reconstructing the city in his imagination, and of beholding Rome as she had been before she was remanied."

1. pp. 256 vol. I. Vasari.

It is, however, during the earlier period, notwithstanding fully appreciated the classical principles, they yet presented to us the architectural forms in somewhat arbitrary and uncertain proportions. They were more or less contented to dispose of forms at random and to yield to a graceful, fanciful style, which at this time inspired many minds, rather than to follow the rule regulated by the ancients. This was also felt in ornament. The ornament[1,2] of the period is characterlized by the promience of elaborate natural forms closely copied from nature.

1. J. Ward, 'Historic ornament - Prehistoric ancient mediaeval Renaissance Art and architecture', pp. 391. " The bronge gates of the Baptistery of San Giovanni (1425-52) are the finest examples of the Quattro cento style (1400), both as regards ornament and figure work. The modelled work in high relief of fruit, flowers, and foliage on these gates, and similar work on great medallions and altar-pieces of Luca della Robbica (1355-1430) - - - and of Jacopo delle' Quercia (1374-1438), the Sienese sculptor."

2. Lübke, pp. 136, states that, "although these (decorative works) works err in excess of grace and elaboration, and though weak points appear to the strict architectural critics, they are still as far beyond the contemporaneous decoration of the late Gothic style, in freshness, naïvete', wealth of fancy, and graceful finish, as free artistic feeling is beyond merely mechanical handwork. According", he emphasizes. "these very works of the early Renaissance generally exert that resistless attraction which is the lovely privilege of inspired youth."

We are particularly pleased to notice the general disposition of architectural mass in which the earlier architects could produce the grandeur and breadth of design which characterized the works of the Romans. Brunelleschi's dome of the cathedral of Santa Maria del' fiore in Florence, for instance, appeared no more excellent, both from the engineering as well as aesthetic stand point. In its grandeur in expression it ranked only next to the Dome of St. Peter's at Rome. Still more admirable is its free, sincere expression as a whole, charming and almost youthful grace, the more grasped the spirit of the antiquity and less affected by the mere formulae of the classics, which characterized the declining period; and above all it reveals the Tuscan simplicity which is almost characterized by excess of sobriety and gravity.

If it were grandeur, breadth and simplicity the key note of the Work of the genius of Brunelleschi, we owe perhaps Donatello a more correct appreciation of the beauty and grace of nature, which characterized the works of the Greeks. Vasari tells us of the exquisite beauty of Donatello's works, and he says, "the productions of Donatello displayed so much grace and excellence, with such correctness of design, that they were considered to resemble the admirable works of the ancient Greeks and Romans more closely than those any other

1. Vasari, pp. 306, vol. I.

master had ever done." He also states in another place, "the drawings of Donato (Donatello) are extremely bold and his designs evidence the faculty and freedom which had no equal, as may be seen in my book of drawings, where I have figures clothed and naked, drawn by the hand of the master, with some animals, which astonish all who see them and many other extremely beautiful thing."

Renaissance architecture in Florence did its best work in the realm of secular architecture. Magnificent palaces and sumptuous private dwellings met every need with its appreciation and individual form among the upper classes of society. The first of these larger palaces in Florence is the Reccardi designed by the architect Michelozzi for Cosimo de' Medici in 1430 Melevation it has two stories over a high rusticated basement, and is grandly simple in design. The facades of the Riccardi have no engaged orders, but the great cornice has classic profiling, and its bed mouldings have dentils and other classic details. Like other buildings of its class it is in plan a survival of the ancient Roman house, having the form of a rectangular enclosing an open court. Another type of Florentine palace of the early Renaissance is exemplified in the palazzo Pitti, designed by Brunelleschi, which may have not excelled in elegance, but has never been equalled

in its dignity, simplicity, and majesty of effect. "The principal front is about 475 feet long, average nearly 70 feet in hight ------ the bold massive wall--- of the ground stories of the whole front of the Pitti palace, was an Etruscan tradition, handed down through the centuries by successive generations of Florentines. at Fresole, at Volterra, Cortona, and others cities close at hand, are still many remains of Walls, gate way, etc, of great massiveness, the works of the early settlers."

With the entrance of the high Renaissance, the centre of gravity of the artistic movement was transferred to Rome, after the art-inspired Pope Julius II had ascended the chair of St. Peter (1503), he called the greatest masters of art to his court, among them were Bramante, Raphael, and Michelangelo, and by the latter, Renaissance architecture culminated in its greatest success.

The high Renaissance architecture, as in the case of Florence, did its best work in secular architecture. In plan Roman Palaces closely resemble Florentine, and the central court yard is a feature in nearly all. In large palaces it becomes a stately Court, surrounded by paved and vaulted arcades. In elevation the orders used freely broken up the wall surface and at the same time marked the hight of the different stories." The Facade of the Cancelleria at Rome designed

1. Charles. H. Moore, pp. 103 2. F. M. Simpson, vol. III. pp. 33.

3. Fergusson, "Modern History", pp. 102.

by Bramante is one of the earlier type of Roman palace, It has 300 ft. in length 85 ft. 6 inches in height to top of cornice, and divided it three great stories or rather division, — the lower storey rusticated, and the upper ornamented by pilasters." The later type of the palace have notice that the architects had then learned to make the classical treatment of forms its own, to perfect technical methods to solve the most difficult problems of colossal treatment of form, and to make arts in the richest into the service of architecture. The Facade of the Museum in the Capital at Rome by Michelangelo is an early specimen of the grand and imposing style of corinthian pilasters running through two stories, which afterwards became so fashionable, But, compared with all the preceding examples, it has never been equalled in majesty of effect and imposing character, — the dome of St. Peters' at Rome, designed by Michelangelo.[1,2]

1. Vasari, vol. IV. pp. 187

Vasari states, "the work is so admirably conceived and so ably executed, that the eyes of one who understands and is capable of judgement, can see nothing more graceful, more beautiful, or more ingenious."

2. Rosengarten, pp. 401. "the mighty and glorious dome of St. peters' at Rome which has no rival in the world, must be adduced

as a striking picture, — both as regards its colossal dimensions, as well as its beautiful proportions and lines, it produces, both internally and externally, a most wonderful impression."

To sum up we have noticed that the favorable conditions of the country and the mental activity of the individuals unabled them to throw off the mediaeval yoke and emerge into the lights of the new age, and also that Italian genius acting on the awakened man is one of the chief factors of the intellectual movement and that the likeness of the views of life among the ancients, (Greeks and Romans) and the Renaissance people, made it possible for the taller to be guided by the former, yet they succeeded as an enlarged scale, and that from the Romans the Renaissance inherited the practical conception of life and from Greeks the intellectual, — from Romans, utility and the elements of grandeur and breadth in design, from Greeks the perception of Beauty, and finally that both ancients and Renaissance arts were founded on the humanism on which rests modern civilization. The ideal of humanity which is held firmly in our mind, once regained through the Renaissance, can not be lost again. It is in this spirit that our modern architecture

is founded, and will be established as long as human nature remains unchanged. Modern architecture essentially draws her inspiration from that of Renaissance, as much as Renaissance from that of the ancients. The more we appreciate Renaissance architecture the more we can appreciate Modern architecture. The scope of this paper is limited to give an introduction to more important subject — Renaissance architecture, which is to be treated in a later thesis.

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